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The Langshan controversy in England and



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THE Croad, A. C.
LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY,



In England and the United States.

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PREFACE.

In May and June last, an English Poultry Paper, called the *Fancier's Chronicle*, published some articles, entitled "The Langshan Controversy". They were signed "Staff," who opened his subject with an avowed ignorance of the breed. This (I mean ignorance) was displayed throughout; but some of his arguments were of so specious a character that I felt myself constrained to reply. My letters appeared in July. I now find that an American Paper, called *The Poultry Bulletin*, has reproduced "Staff's" letters, but has failed to give my reply, and instead has published some notes from the pen of one Mr. Ludlow, of Birmingham, who borrowed some Langshans of me in June last, to Lithograph for the *Poultry Bulletin*.

In course of his correspondence with me, Mr Ludlow also avowed himself ignorant of the Langshans as a breed.

Had the *Poultry Bulletin* given my letters as well as "Staff's" and Mr. Ludlow's notes, I should have left the truth to work its way.

But the palpable unfairness of the whole proceeding obliged me to place my defence of the breed side by side with "Staff's" and Mr. Ludlow's untrustworthy statements, and also to add a few words of practical application.

A. C. CROAD,
Manor House,
Durrington,
Worthing,
ENGLAND.

Nov. 27th, 1879.

NOTE. — Since this book was written, "The Poultry Bulletin" has given satisfactory evidence that no unfairness was intended to the Langshans as a pure and distinct breed; and least of all any disrespect to Mr. Croad.

MRS. R. W. SARGENT,

Kittery, York County, Maine,

SOLE AGENT IN THE UNITED STATES,

— FOR —

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With notes by MAJ. A. C. CROAD, sent for 6 cents.

All who wish to know the history of the Langshan, and how they were received in England by Poultry Fanciers there, should read this book, which is the first Major Croad has offered to American Fanciers, although the Langshan or *birds of that name* are in many of the Poultry Yards of this country. The Book and Standard gives such clear description of what a pure-bred-genuine Langshan should be, that none need be deceived by the mongrels scattered over the Country.

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LANGSHANS.

THE LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY.—I.

Whether the Langshan Fowl is, or is not, identical with the Black Cochins, has for some time been very hotly disputed. As I have taken some trouble to look into the matter, I think that the evidence which I have collected may not be without interest at the present time. As interested motives have frequently been imputed, both to the supporters and the opponents of the Langshan fowl, I may as well state at the outset that I never owned a Langshan or Black Cochins in my life, and do not think it very likely that I ever shall. About two and twenty years ago, I did own a Buff Cochins cock, and, I think, a hen or two, but they were running loose in a yard with other fowls, and I never took much notice of them. With this exception, I never possessed any Cochins at all. Therefore, I come into the controversy not only with clean hands but also without any bias or self-interest to effect whatever judicial faculty I may possess. I fear that I shall be rather tedious, but I want to present the evidence in as complete a form as possible.

It is obvious that no discussion of the origin of Langshans can be complete which does not take into account the origin of Cochins. What, then, was the origin of the latter?

In the year 1843, when the ports of North China had been thrown open on the conclusion of the war, the Queen received some fowls which were called Cochins Chinas. The reason that this name was given them does not appear. On the 23d December of the same year, an illustration and description of these fowls appeared in the *Illustrated London News*. The illustration was evidently the work of some one not very well ac-

quainted with fowls, but the birds were clearly entirely unlike what are now known as Cochins. They were clean legged, tall and slim, quite devoid of fluff, with well developed tails, held high. The hens were partridge-marked. The cocks had brown backs and black tails, and light breasts with a band or "horse shoe" of black across them. The eggs were of a deep mahogany colour, and the birds were supposed to be related to the family of Bustards.

The points to be remarked here are: (1) That the name Cochins was originally given to fowls which were quite unlike the birds to which this name is now given; and: (2) That it was absurdly reported that these fowls were allied to the Bustard or Wild Turkey.

For several years after 1843 nothing more was heard of the Cochins. A poultry show was held in the Zoological Gardens in 1845, in which there was a class for Malays, and other Asiatic breeds, but no Cochins were exhibited there. The year 1847 must be taken as that from which the introduction of the fowl, which is now called a Cochins, dates. Mr. Sturgeon, who was once a celebrated breeder of this variety, relates how in that year he became, by chance, possessed of a few birds which had been purchased from a ship in the West India Docks.

When once they had been really introduced into this country, the mania for Cochins quickly spread. In the year 1850, we find the pages of the *Cottage Gardener* full of correspondence about them. Fabulous tales were told of the large profits which might be made by keeping them, and anything called a Cochins met with a ready sale at a large price. The mania became so general that several references to it appeared in the pages of *Punch*, and many people will remember an amus-

ing sketch by Leach, of the excitement caused in a country household at the announcement: "The Cochin-China hen has laid an egg."

Among the correspondence in the *Cottage Gardener*, were many letters finding fault with the name by which these fowls were called. Many correspondents pointed out that the name Shanghai was more appropriate. In a communication from Mr. Robert Fortune (who is introduced as having lived many years in various parts of China,) in *The Poultry Book* (Tegetmeick) the following sentences occur:—"The southern Chinese were as much struck with the size of the breed as we were," and "the Shanghia breed seems to be more common about Shanghai than any where else in the north; but I found it all over the low country of that part of China." A correspondent of the *Cottage Gardener*, however, finds fault even with the name of Shanghai, as not being sufficiently accurate. In a letter which appeared in that paper on the 2d Dec., 1853, he writes:—"You would oblige me by informing me, if you can, why the *Poultry World*, in speaking of China fowls, use indiscriminately, as they do, or, in fact, why they use at all the prefix "Cochin," and do not call them simply "China Fowls?" I have endeavored, but in vain, to ascertain the origin of the name "Cochin China," as applied to fowls, and can not learn that there is, but, on the contrary, I believe, from all that I have learned, there is not any breed peculiar to, or to be found in that particular part of China, or bearing its name. I have kept China fowls for nearly four years, and possess birds bred from the larger sort, and some of the earliest (if not the first, except the Queen's, presented to her Majesty by the Emperor of China) introduced into England. These birds, however, came from a far more northerly province, viz: that of Peangnan, in China Proper, to which place, also, I know that the best birds in this country, that is those that have taken prizes during the past and current year, are indebted, in

part, if not wholly, for their parentage. The synonym of Shanghai, which has now become generally current, was given to the race to which mine belonged, merely because they were shipped from the port of that name, and as a distinction from the smaller class of birds which, at the earliest English Exhibitions, were described and acknowledged by the judges as Cochin Chinas, between which and mine there is a great difference, as there is also between those originally and those now received as Cochins."

What the early Cochins were like may be gathered from a description in the *Cottage Gardener* of April 25th, 1850, from the pen of Mr. Bailey, of Mount Street:—"I will endeavour to describe a fine bred fowl of this kind—small head, small comb, red face, yellow legs, slightly feathered sometimes, (but very seldom,) pin clawed, large, square bodies. The tufts of feathers on the leg is more distinct in some than in others, but where it projects too much, I do not like it." A month later an anonymous writer in the same paper complains that the only two chickens he had hatched from a purchased sitting of eggs "were, and are, black, with black legs."

On the 16th December, 1853, there is an account of the poultry yard of Mr. Bowman, who was at that time a noted exhibitor, in which "some coal-black Cochin China Chickens" are described, and it is remarked that "some of the birds showed a little gold on the hackle, but several were coal black."

It would appear from these extracts—which, it should be remembered, were written long before the Langshan controversy was heard of: (1) That the birds to which the name Cochin has been given did not come from Cochin China, but from North China; (2) That the old Cochins had much less leg-feathers than those now exhibited; (3) That there is a trace of some black Cochins with black legs as early as the 23d May, 1850, and that some black Cochins (colour of legs not stated) are described on December 16th, 1853.

With one more extract from the *Cottage Gardener*, which may possibly turn out to be of some importance, I shall conclude all I have to say of Cochins in the old "mania" days. On the 18th September, 1851, Anster Bonn, a regular contributor, writes:—"It should be borne in mind by the dealers and amateurs, that there are two kinds of Cochin China fowls,—the square built variety, which I have so minutely described, which I keep, and which (perhaps on that account) I most admire, and those which slightly resemble the Malay, but which I believe to be the pure bred Cochin China, notwithstanding."

In the *Live Stock Journal* for March 22d, 1878, the editor states that in Miner's Poultry Book, published in 1853, there is an account of some Black Cochins, which were then imported into the United States, and known as "Packard Importation." The editor also states that in Miner's book, and also in Dr. Bennett's, (1851) there are accounts of black fowls known as "Hong Kongs" and "Black Chinas," which seem to have somewhat resembled the second type of Cochins briefly described by Anster Bonn.

So much for the origin of Black Cochins.

What, then, was the origin of Langshans?

In a letter signed A. C. Croad, which was published in the *Live Stock Journal*, on the 17th May, 1878, the following account of the origin of the Langshan is given:

"Shanghai became a treaty port in 1844, but it was not until 1862 that a light-ship was stationed off the Langshan crossings. Communication with Shanghai and the light-ship being irregular, the Captain and officers landed from time to time, to purchase stock. Seeing these fowls, they purchased some, not thinking anything of the breed, but more on account of their size. But, being so pleased with their delicate flavour, they now and then sent a present of some to their friends in Shanghai. These, in their turn, solicited the Captain and officers to bring some of them for stock.

When the natives became aware of this, they thought they might just as well send them direct to Shanghai themselves. Through the success of the sale of these birds at Shanghai the breed became scarce in their native place, and the people would only dispose of them when they were in moult, and considered unfit for sacrifice; for there is, as I before told you, a temple at Langshan, and the Langshan is a 'Yop,' or sacred bird."

In a letter signed A. C. C., published in the *Fancier's Gazette*, on Feb. 12th, 1875, are the following passages:—

"The birds occupying Pen 157 a, at the Portsmouth Show, were entered as Langshans, because that is the name they are known by in the settlement of Shanghai, to which place the Chinese bring them down from the north. The Europeans there always call the varieties of Cochin 'our Shanghai bird', but the Langshan is quite another affair. The Chinese consider it allied to the Wild Turkey; its flesh is very white and delicate in flavour. * * * * *

"My birds have always the same penciled-coloured legs; they never vary. I must add that my hen at the Portsmouth Show reached me from China in Feb., 1872."

It will save trouble, and render my argument in the end clearer, if I draw attention to certain points in the evidence as I go on. It appears then from the above extracts—

1. That a variation in type of China fowls was recognized as early as 1851.
2. That Black China fowls were imported into America in 1851.
3. That Black China fowls were imported from Langshan to Shanghai somewhere about 1862.
4. That the "varieties of Cochins" are known in China as "our Shanghai bird."
5. That, in 1875, A. C. C. asserted that Langshans had "penciled coloured legs."

6. That it was absurdly reported that the Langshans were related to the Wild Turkey.

(Signed,) "STAFF."

From *Fancier's Chronicle*,
May 23rd, 1879.

THE LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY.—II.

The next point to be considered is, what were the Black Cochins like upon the introduction of the Langshans?

In the *Live Stock Journal*, of February 22d, 1878, there is a letter from one of the authors of "The Langshan Fowl," in which he writes as follows:—"The Black Cochin of ten-years ago, with yellow legs, small comb, jaundiced face, rusty black plumage, and tawny skin." This sentence, standing by itself, might be regarded as merely a description of some degenerate birds which used to be shown in 1868; but the last sentences of his letter clearly show that he imagined he was describing a standard bird: "Let the judges insist upon a return to the old characteristics in the black Cochin classes. By these means even handed justice will be done to all classes, and the yellow legs and jaundiced faces of 1868 will again be seen in the show pen in the black Cochin classes, and we Langshan fanciers shall thus be left to compete for our own prizes, without fear of seeing the coveted cup carried off by a mongrel."

Is the above an accurate description of a typical black Cochin?

The standard of excellence was drawn up many years before the Langshan controversy was heard of, and in it black Cochins are thus described:—

"BLACK COCHINS—COLOUR OF COCK AND HEN.

Comb, face, deaf-ear, and wattles,—brilliant red.

Plumage.—Perfectly black throughout. The cock as free from coffee-red, or hazy colour as possible.

Legs.—Dark, with yellow tinge and black feathers."

It will be remembered that the only point in the description of a black Cochin by one of the authors of "The Langshan Fowl", which is not flatly contradicted by the standard is the "small comb," but even here he appears to be inaccurate, for on the 22d March, 1878, the editor of the *Live Stock Journal*, writes: "the edition of Mowbray, as revised by Neall, states of black Cochins, under date of 1854, that 'the comb and wattles we fancy in good specimens, are rather larger than other sub-varieties.'"

I have been looking over the old files of the *Fancier's Gazette*, to see if I could find any description of what the Black Cochins, which were actually exhibited before the Langshan blood, were like. In the number for June 13th, 1874, (which I should imagine was before the distribution of any Langshan chickens,) there is a report of the Bath and West of England Show, at Bristol, from which I extract the following:—"The best handful of Black Cochin Cocks we have yet seen, especially Mrs. Taafe's pen, 339, which was not large, but really good in shape, head, and with some signs of real leg-feathers. We notice, by-the-by, one cock which exploded the idea lately broached, that the black legged Black Cochin being the only Lion Pure, never showed red plumage, which was to be seen only on birds produced by crossing Buffs with Whites. Well, there was a cock here with legs as black as your hat, with hackles a good mahogany colour. So much for theories."

On the 27th of November, 1874, a letter appears in the *Fancier's Gazette*, which, as it is of some importance, I give entire, with the editorial note appended to it:

“BLACK COCHINS.

On looking over your report on Crystal Palace awards, I find you complain of my Cockerel having yellow legs. Always taking this to be the standing colour. I am at a loss to know what colour they should be. Your standard work says they should be dusky yellow. What is dusky-yellow? I have always tried to avoid a black leg. Expecting to learn from other breeders on the subject, as the breeding season is coming on soon, I want to know what colours to breed.

THOMAS ASPIN.”

[“In the work referred to, it is expressly stated that hardly any specimens were then to be found, and little information could be given. Since then, the classes have been formed, and black legs seem to be the rule, and we believe are bred for by most.”]

It is to be noted here:—

1. That black Cochins were usually rather lacking in leg-feathers.

2.—That they sometimes had coloured hackles.

The next point is—What are Langshans like? Here I must say I am somewhat at a loss. I want to produce documentary evidence for everything, and I have some difficulty in finding any exact description of Langshans; but I will do my best. The book on the Langshan fowl which might help me is, I am sorry to hear, out of print.

In the *Fancier's Gazette* for February 12, 1875, A. C. C. writes:—“The Langshan is not so fully feathered about the legs.” (as the Cochins.)

The report of the Langshans at the Crystal Palace Show of 1876, in the *Live Stock Journal*, is as follows:—“Langshans were a queer joke. In old birds, only two pairs turned up, the winning hen having white feathers coming on her face. In chickens, however, was the farce. The cup cockerel has a very high tail; but, we repeat deliberately, save from being rather high and bare on the leg, differs nothing from the black-legged Cochins

elsewhere. Second, were Mr. Darby's black Cochin chickens, he having simply selected a cockerel rather tall and full in tail, though not so full as we have seen Cochins win with. But Mr. Croad's two pens astonished us most. We thought it laid down the Langshans were high on leg and scantily feathered, but one of Mr. Croad's cockerels was the shortest legged and dumpyest Cochin in all the black classes, and *hocked*, as was the pullet in the other pen, the mate of each being barely feathered; they also were the brownest and least lustrous; and we give the matter up in despair.”

On the 23d March, 1878, the editor of the *Live Stock Journal*, in summing up the controversy, quotes from the “Langshan Fowl” as follows: “Now and then a Langshan cockerel will show red or golden feathers, which generally appear in the hackle or saddle, or both,” &c.

In the *Live Stock Journal* of the 27th October, 1877, Mr. Croad writes:—“The hue of the leg I consider a most essential point, for I have never, in any single instance, found it to vary; from generation to generation, it is the same dark penciled, repeated over and over again. In the older birds this hue fades somewhat. The amount of leg feathering, on the contrary, varies considerably—my imported specimens, with two exceptions, (that were without,) have been what I should consider well feathered. No doubt, side by side with the Cochin, to a Cochin fancier, they would appear poorly endowed, but see them in their run”; &c.

I have searched all the files of *Live Stock Journal*, but can not find any more definite description of the Langshan than the above. I have, however, lighted upon one letter which throws a curious light upon the “most essential point.”

On November 2d, 1877, Mr. Darby wrote, drawing attention to the following passage in “The Langshan Fowl”:

"About the same time another Cochin breeder published a statement to the effect that he had picked up some of the Langshan birds, cheap, on board a China trader, in the East India Docks; but, inasmuch as he had already participated in the proceeds of the June importation, and had, therefore, got Langshan blood in his poultry yard, he had little to gain from this acquisition, more especially as he was anxious to breed these black birds to the same pattern as his White Cochins. At any rate, the owners of the pure Langshan are indebted to him for the information that he had sold one of his hens to Mr. Darby, because we know that his Black Cochins crossed with this hen were entered in the Langshan class, at the Crystal Palace Show in 1876," &c.

Mr. Darby denies that his pen exhibited at the Crystal Palace were bred from the hen in question, and, he further states that the hen which he bought from Mr. Woodgate, and which is here claimed as a Langshan, in the standard work on Langshans, had bright yellow legs!

It is to be noted here—

1. That Langshans are usually lacking in leg-feathers.

2. That they should have dark penciled legs, but that one hen, claimed as Langshan, had yellow legs.

3. That they sometimes have coloured hackles.

I have produced all the evidence I could procure, and I must reserve my summing-up for another paper.

(Signed,) "STAFF."

From *Fancier's Chronicle*,
May 30th, 1879.

THE LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY.—III.

Any one who reads attentively my two first papers will, I think, see to what conclusion the evidence points.

The birds which, in 1847, were imported into England under the name of Cochins, had nothing whatever to do with Cochin China; they were dispatched from Shanghai. But it is at least doubtful whether they were indigenous to that place, or whether they came originally from some more northerly part of China. There is little evidence forthcoming, and what little there is, is not convincing; but, at any rate, it is not an established fact that the so-called Cochins were natives of Shanghai, or were known at that place before 1846 or 1847, and it seems not improbable that the native Shanghai birds were a smaller and degenerate race. With the birds that first came over, an absurd report that they were related to Wild Turkeys arrived. The birds were of various colours—most frequently buff, I believe, though as early as the 20th May, 1850, some black China fowls, with black legs, had been hatched. As early as 1853 some black China fowls were absolutely imported into America. None of the early Cochins seem to have been so heavily feathered as they are now, and some appear to be very much lighter in build. Each type of Cochins had, for a time, its supporters, but before long all were bred to one fixed standard. By continually breeding from the birds most squarely built, with heaviest leg feather and most abundant fluff, these points became at last firmly fixed in the breed. But while birds of other colours were easily bred to this standard, blacks were an exception; they had a tendency to breed chickens deficient in leg-feather, with comb and hackles larger than in the other colours, and with black legs. Whether this variation was due to the fact that Blacks were really a different race, (which I am myself inclined to believe,) or whether it was only an instance of what Darwin calls "correlated variation," is a matter of very little moment. The tendency to black legs is one that is noticed in all fowls of a dark colour. It is now the fashion to breed coloured Dorkings and Houdans as dark as possible, and the effect on the

legs may be seen at any large show.

In 1872 there was a fresh importation of black fowls from Shanghai, under the name of Langshans; it was said they were not natives of Shanghai, but had been brought down from a more northerly part of China. They had black legs, less leg-feather, less fluff, longer tails, and larger combs and wattles than the accepted type of Cochins. It was stated that the natives of China considered that they were allied to the Wild Turkey. They were exhibited in the variety-class at several English shows, but so slightly did they differ from Black Cochins that the judges thought they had been entered in the wrong class by accident. I have before me now the catalogue of the Oxford Show for 1874. The show was judged by some of the most skilled and experienced of poultry judges, and "Langshans" entered in the variety class are marked "wrong class." About this time it would appear that the importers of the Langshans considered them synonymous with Black Cochins, but that they should be judged by a Langshan and not by a Cochin standard; for at a show held at Bromley, of which one of the authors of "The Langshan Fowl" was secretary, there was a class for "Cochins, any colour but Black," and a class for Langshans, but no class for Black Cochins; a tacit acknowledgment that the Langshans were identical with Black Cochins. However, the Cochin type proved "bad to beat," and so, in 1876, classes for Langshans were made at the Crystal Palace. The judge awarded the second prize to Black Cochins, apparently being unable to detect any difference between them and Langshans. Now, the curious thing is that, while trained poultry judges were quite unable to distinguish between Langshans and Black Cochins, and while a believer in Langshans (M. Leys) claimed at Poole Show as Langshans a pair of birds which other believers in Langshans asserted were Black Cochins, we are told that the people in and around Shanghai, who are familiar with the

varieties of Cochins under the name of "our Shanghai" bird, recognize Langshans as a distinct breed. Now, if it is a fact that birds in every way resembling our Buff, Partridge, Cuckoo, White and Black Cochins in colour, points and size, (size is of great importance,) are found in the neighborhood of Shanghai, it is a very remarkable thing that the European residents of Shanghai who are not poultry fanciers, were able to see at once points of difference between Black Cochins and Langshans, which the experienced eye of the best English judges could not detect. If the varieties of Cochins do not include the Blacks, then all the imported Black China fowls are Langshans; then Mr. Darby's yellow legged hen was a Langshan, and it can no longer be claimed that the Langshans have always black legs.

The truth of the whole matter seems to me to be this: A slight variation of type is probably natural to each of the different colour China fowls. The White Cochin has not exactly the same shape as the Buff, or the Partridge as the Cuckoo. The Langshan type is the natural shape of the Black China Fowls. It is only by very careful breeding that Black Cochins were prevented from reverting to that type. On the sixth page of Mr. James Long's little book on "Poultry for Prizes and Profit," there is the following passage, under the head of Black Cochins:—"We lately saw a very good hen running in the yard of a person who knew nothing of 'fancy' poultry, and prized her only as a layer. The cock was exceedingly handsome in shape, but barely feathered on the leg, slight in body and long in tail; indeed, he resembled a Game fowl in many points." This passage was written in 1870, and is sufficient evidence that a Black Cochin cock that was not carefully bred, actually did revert to the Langshan type. The explanation of the sensation caused by the Langshans at Shanghai, is, I fancy, simple enough. It is probable that the various coloured China fowls in the neighborhood of Shanghai, are not bred

with any care, and are, therefore, small, regenerate, and coarse. In the neighborhood of Langshan, the Black China fowls are regarded as sacred birds, and are, therefore, probably well fed and cared for, with the result that they are large and fine birds.

No one who has not witnessed it, can have any idea of the difference which careful breeding and feeding makes in any breed of fowls. In the town of Docking a poultry show has been held annually for a great number of years. In this show almost all the classes are for Docking fowls of various kinds; some of the classes are open to all England, and others are restricted to the town and its immediate neighborhood. As the prizes in the All England class are very large, they attract some of the most successful and skilful breeders. It is no unusual thing for birds which had held their own at the Crystal Palace to be beaten at Docking. The local exhibitors are very careful to keep their stocks pure, but they are not professional breeders, and few of them exhibit, except at their own local show. In the All England classes, birds may be seen so much larger in size and darker in colour than those in the local classes as almost to look like a distinct breed, but the ancestors of many of these were actually bought at the Docking show. Their large size and dark colour are due to careful and skilful breeding.

My own belief, then, is that the Langshan is the natural type of the Black China fowl. Black Cochins breeders have always experienced considerable difficulty in breeding to any other type. The name is a matter of no importance whatever.

It is a pity that there should be two sets of classes for Black China fowls; but as the mountain will not come to Mahomet, Mahomet had better go to the mountain. All Black China fowls

are of the same race. It would, I think, be wise if the Black Cochins classes were given up, and the fowls which are now exhibited as Black Cochins, would for the future be exhibited as Langshans. This would be merely following out the plan adopted at Bromley, by Mr. Gedney.

To this the breeders of Langshans may possibly object, that their birds have been before the public for some years, and have had separate classes at Birmingham, Oxford, the Agricultural Hall, the Crystal Palace, and the Bath and West of England Show, and have, therefore, been stamped by the highest poultry authorities in the country as a distinct breed. It is to illustrate a certain defect in our present system of Poultry Shows that I have taken the trouble to write up on this petty controversy. The object of Poultry Shows is supposed to be the improvement of poultry. But the managers of Shows, instead of considering what breeds require or deserve encouragement consider simply what breeds will pay best. The Langshan Club in some of these cases, offer to give the prizes; all the entry fees in the Langshan classes were, therefore, so much clear gain to the managers of the shows, and the bait was too tempting for them to resist. Why were the Silkies withdrawn from the Crystal Palace prize list—because this breed had no merits, and did not deserve to be encouraged? Not a bit of it, but simply because they were not sufficiently profitable to the managers of the show.

Would not the Committee of the Poultry Club undertake to examine the claims of any new breed, and either to grant or refuse a certificate to it? No respectable Show would give a class to any breed which had been refused a certificate.

(Signed) "STAFF."

From *Fancier's Chronicle*,

June 13, 1879.

THE LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY.

What I will call the "opposition benches" in this controversy on the Langshan Fowl, give us the singular advantage of employing people to write on the subject before they have armed themselves with a practical knowledge of the breed. Were there no specimen of the Langshan to be found in England, most decidedly the best way of arriving at the truth would be to collate all the written evidence; but to do this with fairness, the controversy should begin at the very beginning. I cannot see the object of re-producing old newspaper extracts of 1850 and 1851, for if your correspondent wishes to infer that the Black birds alluded to were Langshans, they having destroyed their identity would reflect no credit on their possessors. The Americans have for some time past been sending to me for Langshans, and I must, therefore, conclude that they never possessed them, or that the breed has become extinct in that country. It is quite possible that stray Langshans may have found their way to Shanghai, or other ports of China, or even to England, but they must have been very inferior specimens, or they would, assuredly, have attracted notice, for notwithstanding all that has been asserted to the contrary, the Langshan is an exceedingly handsome bird.— There may be another distinct breed of black fowls in Southern China, but this I have no means of verifying, for, although I am in weekly communication with the north, I have no correspondence with the South, but we may yet hear of the Hong Kongs or "Black Chinas." The Empire of China comprises 4,000,000 of square miles, and when we consider that a portion of this vast area lies between the tropics, and even in the Northern parts of China proper the winters equal in severity those of Russia, we may well believe that the breeds of poultry would be numerous, and would vary with the climate both in their nature and

habits. Before Major Croad sent up his birds to Crystal Palace Show, in 1872, he had some correspondence with the poultry authorities, who told him that from the description he gave they supposed him to be in possession of a new breed of fowls. He begged they would do him the favor to let him know whether clear observation had confirmed this idea. To this letter he received no reply. Circumstances prevented our being present at this show, and it was not until the following May that we heard the name Black Cochin in connection with the Langshan. The old birds we sent up were in moult, but our Cockerel and Pullets have never been surpassed; and, after their appearance at the Crystal Palace Show, there began to be a talk of a separate class for Black Cochins. We already knew that what is called the Cochin in England was not imported from Cochin China, but from the neighborhood of Shanghai; we, therefore, supposed the name Black Cochin to be given to our birds in error, but in good faith, and, therefore, entered three pairs of Langshans in the Black Cochin class at the Crystal Palace Show of 1873. The class numbered in all 16 pens, but we soon found our mistake. When we had them entered in the variety class, they were called Black Cochins; and "wrong class" was the gratuitous piece of information in the catalogue of one show. Where there happened to be a Black Cochin class, I have known some instances of birds being entered in the wrong class, but in no case have I seen such a remark in the catalogue.

As I before stated, whoever attempts to collate the evidence in the Langshan controversy should take both sides fairly, and begin at the beginning. In the Spring of 1876, the columns of the *Country* teemed with letters against the Langshan. Many of these writers made the candid avowal they had never seen one in their lives, and it is only charitable to think that the others had never bred one, for, with any knowledge of the breed, it would have been impossible to have made the statements

they did. I can only say, the adverse criticism on our birds enlightened us much, but the writers of these letters achieved a success quite contrary to their expectation.

In all I have written about the Langshan, I have never abused breeders or breeds. I think there is room for all. I have merely stated what I know to be the truth. The band of enthusiasts (still on the increase,) was created not by those who wrote in favor of the breed, but by its adversaries.—Many persons tried the breed in 1876, to prove the truth for themselves.

The prizes at the Crystal Palace Show, in 1876, came about in this way—several of these new breeders asked if we were to have a Langshan class. I could not advise them to enter their birds in the “variety” class. I knew that no Poultry Committee would endow a class for the first time without some tangible assurance that it would pay, and I felt I could not ask those who had so lately taken this breed on trial to contribute towards one. In this dilemma, a relative and two friends (all non-exhibitors,) gave the prizes in both classes. The cup bird in the Black Cochin class, in 1876, (the date we can all remember,) was a very fine one; it had a yellow face and yellow legs. There were some birds in the Langshan class which had duplicates in the Black Cochin class, no doubt these were all mongrels.

In my next I will tell you how the Club came into existence.

(Signed) A. C. CROAD,
Manor House, Durrington, Worthing,
June 23d, 1879.

From *Fancier's Chronicle*,
July 4th, 1879.

LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY.—II.

Now for the origin of the Langshan Club. A letter appeared in the *Country*, on December 28th,

1876, from which I give an extract: “As an amateur, I have bred these birds, (Langshans) in a yard by themselves, with two kinds of Cochins, also in a yard by themselves, side by side; and I am strongly impressed with the individuality of the Langshans as a distinct family from those recognized as Cochins. I think, for beauty and real utility, the Langshan deserve to be better known, and those who are now striving to popularize these birds are doing good service to the public, by endeavouring to increase a valuable food supply.”

“My object in writing, is to request you to allow me, through your columns, to appeal to Mr. Croad, as the representative of the original introducer of the Langshan, to seriously consider the propriety of establishing a ‘Langshan Club’, upon some such basis as the Leghorn, or the proposed Spanish Club; and, if he can see his way thereto, and will kindly take it in hand, I think he need have no fears for the result.”

The gentleman who made this appeal was, at the time, personally unknown to me; he rendered me valuable assistance in the formation of the club, but he has never exhibited a Langshan, nor has he ever, I believe, sold an egg; the help he gave me was purely disinterested, and from a thorough English love of justice and fair play; and, I must add, that several of our members have hitherto been non-exhibitors.

At this time an article appeared in a contemporary in reply to some enquiries about the Langshans. “Honestly, we think they are nothing but cross-bred fowls, Black Cochins entering principally into their composition. We do not want to raise any discussion on the matter, and we are glad that such an uninteresting subject has hitherto been kept out of these pages. * * *

One thing is certain, and that is weedy Black Cochins have done duty for Langshans in their own classes, and Black Cochin breeders advertise and sell their refused birds as ‘birds of the Langshan

type'; and as these are purchased as Langshans, whatever their origin may have been, such birds will soon be wanting in those peculiarities which Langshan admirers claim for their breed. We believe there are some who assert that the Langshans made the Black Cochins, and not the opposite; but we know for a fact that Black Cochins have come over from Shanghai of the most perfect Cochin type, and that no Langshan blood was in those specimens. Being cross-bred birds, they may have properties which make them useful for the table and other domestic purposes. Useful for culinary purposes Langshans may be; productive layers they possibly are, but mongrels—sad mongrels—they are, beyond doubt. We mean to enter into no controversy, and these pages are in future closed to a discussion on the subject." Allusion is also made to the Wild Turkey alliance; this we will at once dispose of. One of the letters relating to our first importation contained the following:—"The Chinese say the Langshan is allied to the Wild Turkey." Our informant merely repeated what he had been told, when he purchased the birds for Major Croad; they were sent because of their rarity, and without any view to exhibition. I must add that this remark has never been repeated, neither has it been confirmed by my other China correspondents, but their appearance on the table so favours this theory that we may well be excused for having adopted it for a time. I contend that type, or figure, is of minor importance, when compared with the skin and flesh of a breed; the white, thin skin of Langshan, and its delicate flesh, do away with all idea of Cochin affinity.

I should never have known of the article in question but for the courtesy of the gentleman (at the time an entire stranger to me) for whose benefit it was written. I am happy to say he is now a Langshan breeder and a member of the Langshan Club.

Much has been written about the birds that were originally imported from China. Your correspon-

dent tells us that "they were of various types, and each for a time had its supporters, but by continually breeding from the birds most squarely built, with heaviest leg feather and most abundant fluff, these points became at last firmly fixed in the breed." As it has frequently been asserted that these earlier birds resembled the Langshan, the question arises:—What have their admirers done with the flesh and laying properties of their breed? Can it be that in order to perpetuate their own ideal external beauty, they have sacrificed the intrinsic qualities of their birds.

Last year, I wrote to a gentleman who had been many years resident in Shanghai, and who, I had been given to understand, had some knowledge of the Langshan. I quote from his reply to my letter: "I and other residents of Shanghai, have been in the habit of procuring these birds from the Langshan district for the last fifteen years. * * One great argument in favour of the Langshan being a pure and distinct breed is, in my opinion, that as a rule, they come so true to colour and style. We must remember that the Chinese are not fanciers, and that no attempt has been made to improve the breed, hence, I fancy, the occasional variations in feather, &c., one sees. A few coloured feathers would not be looked on by a Chinaman as a serious detriment. I have found, from a Cock of these foul markings, that you are just as likely to breed black chickens." Having been an extensive breeder of Langshans, I can endorse the statements of my correspondent; but I may as well repeat the invariable appearance of the Langshan when it emerges from the shell. Its back is black, and the head, face, and breast is a mixture of black, white and the different shades of canary. When the chick parts with its down it gradually assumes its first black feathers, but it often retains a few white nest-feathers, until almost fully grown, the coloured hackles only come with the adult plumage, and are repeated after every moult. I may here observe that black

breeds are liable to these foul markings, or else why should "coloured feathers" be mentioned as a disqualification in the standards.

Again, I quote from your correspondent:—"Now, the curious thing is, that while trained poultry judges were quite unable to distinguish between Langshans and Black Cochins, and while a believer in Langshans (M. Leys,) claimed at Poole Show, as Langshans, a pair of birds which other believers in Langshans asserted were Black Cochins, we are told that the people in and around Shanghai, who are familiar with the varieties of Cochins, under the name of "our Shanghai bird," recognize Langshans as a distinct breed. It is a very remarkable thing that the European residents of Shanghai, who are not poultry fanciers, were able to see at once points of difference between Black Cochins and Langshans, which the experienced eye of the best English judges could not detect. The European residents of Shanghai would not be in a position to point out the difference between the Black Cochin and the Langshan, for the best of all reasons—there are no Black Cochins in Shanghai or its neighborhood; by Black Cochins, I mean the Cochins with black plumage, yellow faces, and dusky-yellow legs, such as we remember to have seen in the show pens. Of course, an accidental cross might make a Black Cochin with black plumage and yellow legs, and such a bird might have been sent to England, but it would not constitute a breed, and all the evidence points to the fact that a breed with such characteristics does not exist in the neighborhood of any of our treaty ports. We have the information, collected by myself and other Langshan breeders, but most conclusive of all is the negative evidence given by the opposition. There was a great "hue and cry" raised against the dark legs and long tails of the Langshan when they first appeared. Had their opponents been able to procure birds of the true Cochin type, yellow-legged Black Cochins would have flocked over from Chi-

na to confront the Langshan when it next appeared in the show pen. I had some correspondence with M. Leys at the time of the Weymouth and Poole Shows, and as some of his remarks seemed to me of value, I kept his letters. In one of them he says, "but for the prohibitory price you put on your birds, I should have preferred to have possessed them." He took much pains to discover the pedigree of his birds, and from him I learned that they were originally purchased as Black Cochins, but they were considered by the person who purchased them so unlike any other Cochins, black or white, that they thought they must be Langshans, and entered them in a Langshan class, in order to prove whether their surmise was correct, and that the cup was a pleasant surprise.

One of the Committee to whom I had sent a pair of Langshans previous to the show, for his careful examination, told me he doubted the purity of the cup bird. A Langshan breeder who happened to be passing through Weymouth at the time of the show, also told me he did not consider this bird pure. M. Leys, not having had any experience of the breed, would probably be deceived by a cross; this is a much more easy matter than your correspondent seems to think. A friend presented me with three Cuckoo Docking hens; two of them stole nests, and of the chickens brought out, all the cockerels had Cuckoo Docking markings, with leg-feathering, which partook of the character of this variety; all the pullets were black, but with less sheen than the Langshan.—Another case in point: I have been in the habit of putting my supernumerary cocks in a field adjacent to my house, as the Langshan likes a wide range. My birds, not content with their field, wandered through the shrubbery into the road beyond, where my neighbor, in 1877, had a few light Brahmas; last year I was surprised to see a number of chickens straying about that had much the appearance of Langshans, and on enquiry, I found that the fine Brahma cock I had seen had

been destroyed, and I hear that my neighbor is now selling *Langshan eggs and chickens!* As Secretary to the Langshan Club, and a known possessor of pure bred stock, I am frequently called upon to solve doubts, curious facts are often brought to my notice, and one correspondent throws such light on the word of another, that I at length became possessed of a chain of evidence that would prove valuable in a court of law. Last year a gentleman wrote to ask me if the eggs he had purchased could be pure Langshans, that part of the brood was black, part speckled, and one absolutely white; from another I heard that a hen purchased from a Black Cochin breeder, and mated with a Langshan cock, had in several instances produced Partridge Cochins; now, whatever this hen professed to be, it could not be pure, and I consider myself justified in warning people against such birds. Weeds from a Black Cochin yard, for "Mongrels—sad mongrels—they are, beyond doubt!" Your correspondent appears to wish to draw a comparison between the Langshan and the Silkie. The latter is certainly a very pretty ornamental little bird, but its diminutive size would keep it out of any competition with the Langshan; he goes on to say, "Would not the Committee of the Poultry Club undertake to examine the claim of any new breed, and either to grant or refuse a certificate to it. No respectable show would give a class to any breed which had been refused a certificate."

Now, the Langshan brings its own certificate, and has spoken for itself in every yard where it has appeared. I hope and believe that the gentlemen composing the Poultry Club and its Committee are honest and true men, but they would not add to their prestige were they to attempt to banish such a bird as the Langshan from the show pen, for, what do we keep poultry for but as a food supply? And when to that we can add beauty, we ought to be thankful.

It is obvious, from what I have stated, that the

reason for not having a Black Cochin class at Bromley, was because Langshan breeders considered they had made an acknowledged raid on the Langshan, and that they were not a pure breed. I hope I have made it plain that it is often difficult to discriminate between a cross and a pure bred bird, and, as far as I can see, those who judged them have had a very difficult task to perform. It is my great desire that the judges should possess themselves of a practical knowledge of the breed, but when this is not the case, it would be most satisfactory if they would allow some Langshan breeder, one with a thorough knowledge of the breed (of course a non-exhibitor,) to go down the class with them. I leave your readers to sum up for themselves; they can draw their own deductions from what I have written, which is the plain, unvarnished truth.

(Signed) A. C. CROAD.

P. S. May I ask you to correct a passage in my last letter. I am made to say: "Where there happened to be a Black Cochin class I have known some instances of birds being entered in the wrong class." The previous sentence should read thus: "and wrong class was the gratuitous piece of information in the catalogue of one show where there happened to be a Black Cochin class."

From *Fancier's Chronicle*,

July 18, 1879.

THE LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY.

I hope that you will permit me to reply to A. C. C.'s letters on this subject when he has completed the series. There is, however, one statement in his first letter which I can not allow to pass uncontradicted. There is not a shadow of foundation for the statement that I was "employed" by interested persons to write on this subject. Before writing papers, I wrote to ask the editor whether he would insert them, and I had no communication with any one else on the subject, ex-

cept I wrote to one gentleman to verify a date. I believe that, with the exception of this one gentleman and the editor, no one knows that I am the author of these papers. I think that after my first express disclaimer of interested motives in my first article, and the statements of my reasons for writing in my last, no such imputation ought to have been made.

(Signed) "STAFF."

From *Fancier's Chronicle*,

July 11, 1879.

LANGSHAN CONTROVERSY.

I shall be obliged if you will allow me to answer Mr. Croad, as shortly as possible. I have already proved that birds, in all respects identical to those which have recently been imported as Langshans, were formerly imported under the name of Black Cochins. Mr. Croad, however, seems to think my opinion on this matter can be of very little weight, because I have no practical knowledge of the Langshans. Surely I might fairly retort that his opinion was of very little importance, because he had no practical knowledge of Black Cochins. But the question is not one of opinion, but of evidence. I gave several extracts from old newspapers, to prove that fowls were imported from China under the name of Black Cochins, which differed in no respect from the Langshans. I showed that a red face was one of the points required in Black Cochins, and that although yellow legs were also at one time required, they were so difficult to breed that the attempt was at last abandoned, until at last the leading Poultry Journal actually found fault with some birds at the Crystal Palace, because their legs were not black. Croad urges that the identity of these birds must have been destroyed, or that they were inferior specimens; the fact being that the descendants of these birds are bred and exhibited under the name of Black Cochins to the present day. I have

quoted documents throughout. Mr. Croad prefers to trust to memory. He unintentionally gives a striking example of the danger of this latter course. Referring to the Crystal Palace Show, he writes: "The cup bird in the Black Cochin class, in 1876, (the date we can all remember) was a very fine one; it had a yellow face and yellow legs." On turning to the catalogue of the Crystal Palace Show for 1876, I find that there were three classes for Black Cochins, and that no cup was awarded. The cup was offered to the best pen of white or black Cochins, and no bird in the classes for black Cochins was considered by the judges good enough to win it. If the best black Cochin had a yellow face, this may have been the reason why the cup was not awarded to it, as the standard of excellence says that the face should be brilliant red.

I am glad to have got from Mr. Croad the distinct statement that Black Cochins are unknown in Shanghai, but he goes on to qualify his remark, "by Black Cochins I mean the Cochins with black plumage, yellow faces and dusky yellow legs, such as we remember to have seen in the show pen." I challenge Mr. Croad and the whole Langshan Club to produce a tittle of evidence to prove that a yellow face was ever regarded as anything but a defect in a Black Cochin. When Mr. Darby's yellow legged Black Cochin was imported, it was claimed by the writers of the Langshan Fowl as a Langshan. If any one had gone to the great expense of importing hundreds of yellow legged Black Cochins, nothing whatever would have been proved by it. If one yellow legged black Cochin was called a Langshan, a hundred or a thousand would have been called Langshans also. I have proved that the original Black Cochins were imported from Shanghai; Mr. Croad is pleased to assert the contrary. Be it so.

(Signed) "STAFF."

From *Fancier's Chronicle*,

July 25, 1879.



LANGSHANS.

LANGSHANS.

PART II.

Some eighteen to twenty months ago, a lively and interesting controversy upon these fowls was raging here, in the "old country," and the subject was, for a considerable time, one of the topics for consideration within poultry circles.

Their advocates were not numerically strong, neither was the number of literary disputants large, but the combatants on either side were foemen worthy of the battle. A free and, I believe, candid and honest expression of opinion was given, and the subject pretty well ventilated, and almost exhausted, and thus it has been left to the calm cogitations, speculations and final decision of the fancy at large.

A pamphlet on the "Langshan Fowl" has, I believe been published, and a "Langshan Club," too, has been formed, to advocate their merits and claims, and to raise and maintain them as a separate and distinct class of fowls, worthy as exhibition birds.

The Langshan has been held up to ridicule as a mongrel, useful as a table fowl and egg producer, but as an exhibition bird too closely allied to and possessing only the worst features of our British Black Cochins to be admitted in juxtaposition or in the same exhibition with the latter, even when dubbed with another name. Their advocates, breeders, and admirers, too, have met with much opposition to their fancy, yet have manfully withstood defeat at shows, and rebuffs in verbal arguments, and by typographical contentions.

Nevertheless, they still "stand out" in support of their favorites and the argument advanced in defence of them as a "pure breed" and as "distinct

from the Cochin family." They have also persistently kept, bred and exhibited these fowls, through evil and good report, and thus awakened, and kept awake at least, a very lively interest in the breed.

"Have you seen these new black fowls—"Langshans,"—"Longshanks," or some such name, just imported?" This and similar questions were oft repeated on the first introduction of the breed. Most fanciers were eager to see, and to know something of this "new Chinese," the last new and distinct variety of cockadoodledoo, direct from Langshan or the celestial roosts of Cockadoodledum, the land of pig-tails, Cochin Chinas, and orange pekoe.

Yes, the fancy here have beheld them, for there is invariably amongst British poultry and pigeon fanciers an earnest inherent desire to see, to welcome, and to possess any real novelties of worth belonging to the feathered tribe, which may be produced either in this country or introduced from afar. Therefore, the Langshan, in its turn, produced an impression, whether good or bad, whether fair, deep or durable, remains to be seen; however, we now have them in fair abundance, and I see no reason whatever to regret their introduction, for they are big, fine, useful poultry, and whether fit subjects or not for special classification, they will serve (in fact, they have already served) to regenerate and improve, at least, the few somewhat small and puny "used up," British-bred, Black Cochins, which remained a legacy of the past, to remind us, as it were, of what that section of the breed used to be years ago.

Well, as I have said, we have the Langshans here. They are now represented at many shows, and have become subjects of careful criticism by the skilled writers, who judge much by logical and reasoning power, and also by the more outspoken and uncultivated yet knowing ones, who, as it were, live with their birds, consequently know much of them and of their habits, and who, perhaps, blurt out at once, illiterately, a simple line of facts, in lieu of a chapter of reasoning comparisons. It has been my pleasure to read and hear both sides. I have heard the merits of the birds reckoned up and expressed by two ugly words; I have also heard them spoken of as the "true and pure nondescript," the "Cochin China," Shanghai, Langshan, admixture," and I have heard their merits, demerits and origin argued fairly and reasonably, and being a fancier myself, having kept and studied, almost microscopically, every kind of poultry and pigeons, I claim to know something of the recognized kinds, and probably can form a fair judgment as to the composition of new and less known kinds. Being an artist, as well as a fancier, and in order, by art, to do justice to nature, one is bound to look deep, through and through the subject, to catch at once the cardinal features, and also to make careful, searching scrutiny of the smallest detail. I have then—as a fancier—taken of the Langshans the ordinary general survey, and I have since subjected them to the minute and crucial examinations necessary to faithfully portray the breed. I must say that my opinion as a fancier is in perfect accord with the art test; and I may as well say at once that I find there is truly but little, *very little* difference by which the Langshan can possibly be distinguished from the Black Cochin, to which I, in common with others believe them to be allied. I have hinted at the little difference that does exist between the two, and further on I shall endeavour to explain what I believe to be the cause of this difference, and also to give other reasons for my be-

lief in the "Langshan-Cochin" alliance. Personally, I like the Langshans; we find them big, strapping specimens of poultry—large, vigorous, prolific, hardy and fair to view—and they have also unquestionably proved an acquisition to our poultry stocks. Still, I like (and we should all endeavour) to maintain each breed with as few aliases as possible, upon a fair footing, keeping the line of difference clear and distinct, and their several characteristics well defined and unmistakable.

In these notes, however, I am not about to tell you what Langhans *should be*. I rather prefer, in this case, to portray and describe them *as they are*, and to place my views as to their composition and value in the balance of opinion. I have no object whatever in praising or condemning them; I like the whole poultry family too well to dampen the ardor of enterprising fanciers, or to speak rashly or unfavorably of any breed, new or old, and although I may have my preferences, still I can conscientiously say of the whole group:—

"How happy could I be with either, were t'other dear charmer away."

In order, then, to place the Langshan fairly and truthfully before you, I applied to Major A. C. Croad, of Durrington, near Worthing, England, for the loan of a pair of his *imported birds*. I asked for "imported" birds, so as to enable me to give you a representation of the variety at least "pure" and unalloyed, direct from its native place. In reply to my request, Major Croad at once, very kindly and considerately, sent me for the purpose three cocks and one hen. "One of the cocks," Mr. C. says, "was purchased for me in China." I at once fixed upon him as the one to be placed with the hen for my purpose, and as being a fair-all-around typical specimen. These two, then, were my models for the illustration accompanying this article, and in making the drawing, I have endeavoured to delineate the pair truthfully and without fear or favor, not subjecting them to any improving art or device, leaning neither to one

theory nor another, but with qualities or faults (as I find them), so you have them, in fact, *as they are*, and if to you they don't look *Chineeish*, don't blame me, for in them I cannot discern even the shadow of a wrinkle in any feature, which seems new or foreign to my ideas, or as indicative of a "pure end distinct" race. Well, you have the illustration as a guide, to which, perhaps, I need not append a lengthy description; still some few remarks may be necessary.

Under the title of Langshans, then, these fowls are comparatively "new" to us, having been before the British fancy for only a few years, (1862 I think the first lot are said to have been imported); they are also said to be specialties and natives of Langshan, in North China, and were shipped at the port of Shanghai for England. This I don't dispute. They are tall, bulky birds; large of body and long in limb, combs single, always erect in cocks and generally so in the hens, but occasionally overhanging in the latter, wattle and ear-lobes long and flabby, pendulous, and of a bright, uniform red color; loose skin or dew-lap from beak to throat full and conspicuous, neck long, full, and profusely feathered; back short and fairly broad, rump high, tail very full and flowing, carried rather high and forward, and furnished with good sized sickles, which wave in the breeze as streamers. Stern thick, deep, heavy and fluffy feathered, breast hollowed, being light and narrow through from keel to back; legs long, decidedly leggy, yet free from knock-knee or rickety gait. Shanks scantily feathered, entire plumage of a uniform, glossy black and full of lustre. The beak and legs are, for the most part, black, with flesh-colored variations along the line of mouth, the lower part of toes, and sole of foot. The eye is dark, with but little difference in shade of pupil and iris. These, then, are the points, the outward and visible characteristics of the majority of Langshans which have come under my notice. As to other peculiarities, they are active, agile, and im-

petuous, and have fair sized wings, therefore with useful legs and wings, (although large birds) they are, by means of good locomotive powers, enabled to move about and forage with freedom and ease. They are very prolific, and grow quickly, mature early, and lay well, their eggs being brown shelled (like the Cochin and Brahma); their skin and flesh are white, and as a table fowl, they are said by epicures (I am not very particular myself) to be "delicious." The Langshan has been said, by some, to be a non-sitter, and by others to be untrustworthy, but I happen to know that they are, as a rule, GOOD SITTERS and GOOD MOTHERS.

However, the chief contention is not as to the value, the real worth of the Langshans, or their favorable or unfavorable comparison with other breeds: they are introduced to us as a PURE AND DISTINCT BREED, and as NOT ALLIED TO THE COCHIN, which is the real bone of contention, the objectional part, the very questionable portion of the subject. I believe the Langshan and the Black Cochin to be of the same family. It may be questionable which is the most appropriate or correct NAME, whether Cochin China, Shanghai, Hong-Kong, Black China, or Langshan, but careful search and enquiry seem to prove that all these large varieties originally emanated from North China. They are simply the several branches of the one tree, each branch as it has been lopped off the parent stem and transplanted to a foreign clime, subjected to different cultivation, different atmospheric influences, and above all, to different fashions and forms, and ideas of perfection would, necessarily, become changed. Think of the early Cochins. They were tall, leggy, ranging, bony birds, some fluffy-feathered, the majority ordinary; big, straddling cocks, leg and neck being the first points to elicit derisive laughter, when the breed was new to us; and further, the hollow chest, scantily feathered shanks, the centre toe being almost invariably, plain and featherless. Yes, I have the Cochins of twenty-five years ago, "in my mind's eye, Hora-

tio," and I have a few Cochins of the day before me whilst I write, and the change indeed is great; the inexperienced poultry keeper may be excused if he be skeptical of their affinity; but one learns only by experience the wonders which can be wrought, and the perfection with which ordinary breeds can be worked up to a fixed standard, which, be it known, is achieved only by unity of ideas and action, careful selection and perseverance. We received the Cochin from the Chinese in his rough and raw boned state, possessing, it is true, all the necessary elements for judicious cultivation, from which has been raised the great, massive, noble British-bred Cochin of 1879. Remember that as regards Cochins, although the Chinese poultry keepers are working with the same materials as European and American fanciers, still they use them differently, modeling them, as it were, to their own liking, hence the great difference. But the difference between the imported Cochins and Shanghaes of thirty years ago and the present native Langshan is slight indeed; in fact, "if there's any difference, shure they are just alike," for whilst thirty years of judicious cultivation of the Cochin has done much, little or no progress seems to have been made with the breed in his native sphere, for as we got the early importations of Buffs, Cinnamons, Greys and Whites, and the Blacks of 1840 or 1850, so we get the same type exactly under the new cognomen, Langshan. "A rose by any other name would smell as sweet." Then, I say, if not pure Cochin, it certainly is the chief of their composition, so little, in fact, is the other element, be it what it may, that I doubt its infusion, and as for the few ideal points of difference upon which the supporters of the *pure and distinct* Langshan theory lay especial stress, I think I shall be able to prove them to be of little value as evidence or proof.

Let us then look a little closer into the points of similarity, and draw comparisons with a few of the characteristics which are manifest in both the

Cochin and Langshan. I have briefly described the general external appearance of the Langshan, and in order to save space, I will take it for granted that you are familiar with Cochins; judge then if the following detail is not also indicative of the affinity which seems to me to be unquestionable:

First.—The crow of the Langshan is that hoarse, prolonged gargling, strained sound, which seems to exert the whole body, and be echoed therein.

Second.—The loosely pendant skin on dew-lap is strongly marked, and this is a decided attribute of the Cochin.

Third.—The loose and fluffy plumage, the long and peculiar thin shafts, of flossy texture, of the feather, and its slightly convex formation; the full arched neck, short back, the high rump, the full cushion, the shield-like breast covering, the long thigh, the wide stride, and the smallness of outer toes. All these peculiarities belong to each, and further, Langshans are subjected to scaly leg (*elephantiaris*), but not susceptible to rumpy colds.

Fourth.—The eggs are of the same brownish speckled tint as the Cochins, varying, of course, in tone as do those of the Cochin, and in size and shape they are similar. The chickens, too, are, in their downy garb, precisely as Black Cochins, viz: black, with whitish under parts, and variegated legs and feet.

These comparatively minor characteristics, then, in my opinion, weigh heavily in favor of Cochin blood, for, when considered with the general configuration, the resemblance is striking and convincing.

There are still two or three points wherein there is a slight difference, and upon these the anti-Cochin case seems chiefly to be based, viz: the color of the leg and the color of the skin, the large and flowing tail, their extraordinary quality as layers, and their brilliant sheeny plumage.

First.—Color of the legs. The new Langshans have *black* legs, slightly variegated upon the softer parts. The Black Cochin also *ought* to have *black*

legs; I know that *yellow* is, and has long been the fashion, but it is *radically wrong* and out of keeping with the plumage, whilst the black leg and foot are in perfect accord. Further, I may say with the yellow leg goes the yellow, fatty skin, and with the black leg the white skin. The majority of the early imported Black Cochins had *black legs* and *white skins*. The present yellow-legged Blacks are, in a great measure, the result of "sports" from the original Buffs, Whites, and Cuckoos, carefully selecting the yellow-legged ones only, then knocking all the *Langshan* points out of the breed as often as they were bred, keeping only the yellow-legged ones, thereby almost exterminating the entire variety, leaving them and the Cuckoos and Whites as available crosses, props to each other, (more especially Blacks and Cuckoos), to be regenerated only by the new infusion (importation of 1850), when the black-legged difficulty again set in. It should be no difficulty, for the black is *the correct thing*; therefore I say, "Bravo, Pigtail!" (Cochingly speaking), "You've an eye for harmony!"

Thus I dispose of the leg and skin points of difference, which, as I have shown, are no natural differences, inasmuch as the black-legged and white skinned Cochins have been systematically necked as imperfect, solely in order to follow (what I contend is) a wrong standard.

Then comes the question of the *wing*. The *Langshan* has a large wing, so *had* the *Cochin* when it first reached our shores, but it was a point against him, considered as incompatible with his grave features and the desired object, so his pinions have in the course of say thirty years, been reduced and he has been also made to tuck them up into the fluff. The tail also has been reduced to meet the same views, and in the same manner. *Langshans* have full flowing tails, so also had the *Cochins* when first known to us, but it was decreed they *should be small*, and alas, how difficult it is after all our experiments to maintain these arti-

ficial points. Notwithstanding all our efforts, the black leg *will* come in black poultry, whether we want it or not, 'tis natural, 'tis harmonious. The wings and tail, too, will speedily revert to nature without our constant care and judgment, as too many of our weedy Cochins so often sadly prove. To judge this *Cochin-Langshan* business, comparisons at exhibitions are of not much avail; it's enough, 'tis true, to the practiced eye, but the convincing test is to be found elsewhere. The *Standard Cochins* are sent to the shows, but the *Langshan* type are kept at home for either the spit or breeding *Cochins*.

Langshans, as a rule, are very brilliant and lustrous in plumage, very sheeny, but I have seen many that were *very dull* and rusty; however, admit the little extra "glass," and it don't make them less Cochins. Our Blacks (having so few) have necessarily been extensively inbred, closely bred for *Cochin* points, and not for lustre. Cuckoos and Whites have been the only two opposites to which fanciers looked for a constitutional cross for Blacks, neither of which adds a beam of glass. This, to my notion, has been a mistake, and I have always thought so, but the Blacks, not being a fascinating, taking variety, have been comparatively neglected, and the massive Buffs, when purified and made of uniform shade of color, to suit English ideas, have been thought too good and valuable to be absorbed in the making of the less admired Blacks. But for this we might have had some giant Blacks full of metallic lustre; of course, brassy wings, reddish hackle, and varnished and bronzy feathers, would, from time to time, crop up (as they do in the *Langshan*) until the admixture (the ingredients) became fairly absorbed and shone out, as they then do, in resplendent iridescent hues, as an East Indian duck, or, by the way, the Black Hamburg and Black Malay, which, for proper sheen, send far into the shade the vaunted *Langshan* glass.

One more point I have to consider, and then I

think I have briefly touched upon all the disputed questions. Upon this last point, the quality of the Langshans as egg producers, I shall have little to say. They are said to be excellent layers of delicious eggs, which is a good recommendation, and I believe it. I also know that most of our Cochins are *not* good layers, neither the quantity or the quality of eggs having been the consideration of British Cochin fanciers, *the fruit of the egg* has been the "delicious" portion. We can always get mongrels to supply us with eggs, whilst the more profitable experiments of poultry culture are progressing. A large yield of eggs is a boon and a useful return to those who keep poultry with that end only in view, and in the early Cochin days *they* also contributed to the larder an abundant supply of delicious eggs, but, unfortunately, the exhibitions made the birds in a great measure greatly impaired their fertility. By inbreeding solely for feather and feather, the constitution naturally gives way somewhere, and the source of supply and vital energy becomes somewhat enfeebled, and thus the fancier invariably finds that in the endeavor to realize his own, or to work up to fixed ideal object, he rarely ever attains it, excepting at a sacrifice, having to take with what he wants, some of its accompanying ills and drawbacks. For instance, in obtaining exclusive leg feathering, deep breast and heavy stern, we also must reckon upon the accompanying susceptibility to scaly leg, enlarged crop, and consequent indigestion, "prolapsus" or relaxed vital power. I name these few of the many ills to which poultry

are subject in order to show a reason for the impaired physical power of the British bred Cochin as a layer.

I fear that I have scarcely been explicit enough in these notes, perhaps wearisome. I trust, however, they may be useful, and my meaning rightly interpreted. I hope also that I have not annoyed or disturbed any tender susceptibilities in any friend of the Langshan fancy, or thrown a damper on the budding enthusiasm of others about to add the Langshan to their stock; such indeed is far from my wish, my contention is simply in favor of the *Langshan-Cochin alliance*.

I strongly commend the birds, as very fine, useful, and no doubt profitable stock, and I believe them capable of improvement, but that is a virtue rather than a fault, especially to practical, experimental fanciers, who, with reasonably conceived plans, prefer to work on from year to year persistently at Nature, with well-directed efforts, and at certain objects believed to be attainable and desirable, until the ideal becomes real and accomplished. To such as these, new beauties ever arise, and there is much pleasure and knowledge gained, for 'tis both pleasant and profitable to look deeply into objects of Natural History, and, by experiments, behold, from time to time, the wonders of creation unfold and develop itself until perfection is attained.

(Signed) J. W. LUDLOW.

Birmingham, England.

From *Poultry Bulletin*.

November, 1879.

Notes on Mr. Ludlow's Langshan Article,

WHICH APPEARED IN THE POULTRY BULLETIN, NOVEMBER, 1879.

Also, some Remarks on the Langshan Controversy.

In the Spring of this year, (1879), a Poultry Paper called the "*Fancier's Chronicle*," in which I was asked to take shares), commenced its career. Shortly after the appearance of the first number, I was requested to contribute an article on the Langshans. This, at the time, I was unable to do, but later on a gratis number was sent me, containing a portion of the "Langshan Controversy." This obliged me to become a subscriber to the paper, and I found the article put forth such a string of insidious falsehood and garbled truth, that I was compelled to vindicate the breed. Two letters of complaint from "Staff" followed my reply. The first appeared July 11th, wherein he writes himself much aggrieved that I should have taken it for granted that he had been "employed by interested persons to write on the subject." Any one who will be at the pains to compare the first part of "Staff's" first letter with the concluding portions of his last, will, I feel sure, arrive at the same opinion. On July 25th, he tells us he "has proved his case." He says: "I showed that a red face was one of the points required in Black Cochins, and that although yellow legs were at one time required, they were so difficult to breed that the attempt was at last abandoned." (N. B. That is after Major Croad's Langshans appeared at the Crystal Palace in 1872). He charges me with preferring to trust to memory rather than quote from documents, because instead of *first prize* I inadvertently wrote "Cup." Of course this, on the face of it, is a mere quibble, the real question at issue, is, what birds did

the judge select for their awards? It appears that the Cup was to be contended for by Blacks and Whites. He goes on to say: "If the best Black Cochin had a yellow face, this may be the reason why the Cup was not awarded to it"; he reiterates his previous assertion, that Langshan breeders had claimed a yellow legged bird of Mr. Darby's as a Langshan—this is just as much a quibble as what he says about the Cup. Mr. Darby's birds, at the Crystal Palace Show in 1876, bore strong evidence of a Langshan cross, and as it was stated that he had received an imported bird, we naturally concluded that he had used it to make the cross.

The first article on the Langshans appeared in the "*Fancier's Chronicle*," on the 23d of May. In June I received a civil note from Mr. Ludlow, asking me to do him the favor to lend him a pair of Langshans, as he had received an order from an American paper, for a Lithograph of these birds. At the time this letter reached me, I was slowly recovering from a dangerous illness, and my yard had not received the supervision I delight to give it. Mr. Ludlow was quite a stranger to me, but from the tone of his letter, I had no hesitation in granting his request. My best birds were not available, but I sent him what I felt sure, on the whole, (under skillful hands) would be good subjects for his picture. My hen was very rusty in plumage,—this I attributed to the very trying weather we had last Spring,—but her new feathers have restored her sheen. I remark on this because Mr. Ludlow states, "that he has seen

some Langshans devoid of lustre." In Mr. Ludlow's second letter, he told me that he knew nothing about the Langshans, that he was curious to see some specimen of the breed, that had been the subject of so much controversy. He received my birds on the 17th June, and returned them on the 20th, he therefore had not much time for a study of them. Later on, I wrote to ask him to procure me some copies of the Paper that was to contain the Lithograph—*then for the first time*, I learned that he had been asked to contribute notes on the breed. In September, I received a copy of the *Poultry Bulletin*, and found that it was reproducing "Staff's" libel on the Langshans. I considered this was all fair enough, for however untrustworthy "Staff's" remarks may have been, they would help to fill the paper; but now that I find *my reply* has not been added, but *instead* the remarks of another person, also *wholly ignorant* of the breed have been entertained, the underhanded treachery of the proceeding becomes apparent, and I feel myself called upon to publish the whole "Controversy," and to add a few words of practical application on Mr. Ludlow's erudite production.

In order to be brief, I must pass over a great deal. In one place Mr. Ludlow says: "I am not about to tell you what the 'Langshans' *should be*, I rather prefer in this case, to describe them *as they are*, and to place my views as to their composition and value in the balance of opinion." Further on he says "Under the title of "Langshans," then, these fowls are comparatively "new" to us, having been before the British fancy for only a few years, (1862 I think the first lot are said to have been imported); they are also said to be specialties, and natives of Langshan, in North China, and were shipped at the port of Shanghai, for England. This I don't dispute." (I think all will agree with me, that Mr. Ludlow is making a very ungrateful return for my courtesy; however, he has given me a lesson which I shall not easily forget. I must, however, correct his dates.)—

Major Croad received his first importation of Langshans on the 14th of February, 1872, and we have since received several others. I am in weekly correspondence with the North of China. I am indebted to one gentleman (who has not left Chinese soil since 1859) for the information that the Langshan was introduced to the European community of Shanghai *after* the year 1862. It was he who first informed me that, in 1862, a lightship was for the first time stationed off the Langshan Crossing, and that the officers and crew, on landing to forage, came across these beautiful Black fowls, and that by degrees they made their way to Shanghai, and thence to England. My correspondent is in the Imperial Service of China, and the office he holds enables him to speak with authority on this subject: his remarks have been confirmed over and over again by old residents in Shanghai.

Mr. Ludlow continues: "I believe the Langshan and the Black Cochin to be of the same family. It may be questionable which is the most appropriate or correct *name*, whether Cochin China, Shanghai, Black China, Hong Kong, or Langshan." All conversant with the merest elements of Geography, must be aware that Hong Kong lies between the tropics, whereas our treaty ports in the North are subject to great extremes of cold. Again he says: "Think of the early Cochins! they were tall, leggy, bony birds, some fluffy feathered, some ordinary; big, straddling cocks; leg and neck being the first points to elicit derisive laughter," He goes on to tell us "how breeders have manipulated the Cochin into its present form." But the difference between the imported Cochins of thirty years ago, and the present native Langshan is very slight indeed. "If there is any difference, shure they're just alike." *These straddling Cocks whose legs and necks were the first points to elicit derisive laughter!* In what I will call his summing up, he first notices the crow of the Langshan, which he says "is a hoarse, pro-

longed gargling sound." Some Langshan breeders have thought the crow of the Langshan more of a clarion than that of other Chinese breeds; for myself, I consider it sufficiently thorough bass, and having no Cochins in my yard, I am not in a position to compare the crow of the Langshan with that of the Cochin, of my *own knowledge*, and I never venture to give an opinion on a subject with which I am not thoroughly acquainted, for I consider it both presumptuous and dishonest.

He says: "The eggs are the same speckled, brownish tint as the Cochins, and in size and shape they are similar." The Brahma and the Malay have also tinted eggs, why does he not mention them? I can only say that the old Cochin Breeders who have taken to the Langshan, tell me that they consider their eggs handsomer and far more delicate than that of the Cochin. The chickens, he says, "came out precisely like the Black Cochins"; this of course is due to the Langshan cross so freely used in the yards of the Langshan breeders. I gave a sitting of Langshan Docketing eggs, to a friend four years ago, and although they have always run with a pure Docketing Cock the whole generation of them to this day show their Langshan paternity. "The 'New' Langshan" (says Mr. Ludlow), "has black legs." All my importations came with black legs, and I have bred many thousands of Langshans from them, and these black legs have been repeated in every bird.

Mr. Ludlow says further: "With the yellow leg goes the yellow, fatty skin, and with the black leg the white skin." As this theory has frequently been stated, I will dispose of it at once. I emphatically deny, that the black legs of a bird influence its flesh and skin. The Andalusian, Minorca, and Black Spanish, are supposed to be of the same family, and although they differ in many points, in their skin and flesh bear some resemblance to each other: the black plumage of the Spanish does not convert it into a good table fowl.

I maintain that *skin and flesh* are *sure tests* of

breed, the *thin*, white skin of the Langshan, takes it at once out of the Cochin family.

Mr. Ludlow continues: "There are still two or three points wherein there is a slight difference, on which the anti-Cochin case seems chiefly to be based, viz: the color of the leg and the color of the skin, the large and flowing tail, their extraordinary quality as layers, and their brilliant sheeny plumage." This latter, Mr. Ludlow seeks to dim,—he says: "By the way, the Black Hamburg and Black Malay, which, for proper sheen, send far into the shade the vaunted Langshan glass." Those who know anything of the breeds here mentioned, will at once see how utterly false are Mr. Ludlow's statements.

He says: "To judge this Cochin-Langshan business, comparisons at Exhibitions are not of much avail; it's enough, 'tis true, to the practiced eye, but the convincing test is to be found elsewhere. The *Standard Cochins* are sent to the Shows, but the Langshan type are kept at home, for either the spit or *breeding Cochins*."

Now this is very edifying, and taken with what crops up here and there, as to what *varieties of Cochins* *Fanciers* look to for a constitutional cross for Blacks. "Neither of which has a beam of glass." This at once initiates us in all the mysteries of the Black Cochin art. I must revert to the Standard Cochin being sent to the Shows, and the Langshan type kept at home. Mr. Ludlow knows as well as I do, that he is here speaking of a Black Cochin breeder's yard. The Black Cochin breeder *first made his birds*, with two varieties of Cochins that did not give what he calls a "*beam of glass*"; he then crossed them with the Langshan, in order to get a "*beam of glass*"; after this, he selected the most Cochin looking birds for the Show, and kept those of the Langshan type at home. I have received letters from persons who have purchased eggs from Black Cochin breeders, and they tell me the chickens have turned out to be White, Partridge and Black. Here Mr.

Ludlow's information proves of great value. In a letter I received from him, dated the 22d August, in speaking of his literary production, after saying he has striven to write honestly, he adds: "I should probably have been a silent spectator, 'for 'tis not a bed of roses' to be a party to two or three controversies simultaneously; it takes up too much time, and does not always promote good and friendly feeling, although, in the end, some good is generally derived."

Here I must leave Mr. Ludlow to his friends, the Black Cochins Breeders, who, I fear, will not give him a "bed of roses." For myself, I would advise none to be led into writing on a subject of which they are entirely ignorant, but should they, from circumstances, be obliged to give an opinion, let them *speak the truth*. There is an old French Proverb which says: "It is only the truth that offends." Should the truth offend, the wound it leaves is wholesome, and the person who speaks it does not lose his own self-respect or that of others.

After having been forced into writing this much, I must be allowed to sum up. I am a great admirer of Poultry, and would not make any a subject of ridicule, but in the light of Mr. Ludlow's "leg and neck being the first points to elicit derisive laughter," I must say I consider the Cochins, as compared to the Langshan, like the Dray-Horse compared to the Arab Steed; and for useful qualities the Langshan throws the Cochins far into the shade. If, as its adverse critics would have us believe, the Cochins of thirty years ago exactly resemble the Langshan, *they convict themselves* of having worked systematically to destroy a valuable food supply; but I am still in position to state, the old Cochins of thirty years ago are still natives of Shanghai, and that the Langshan is known both by *Europeans and Chinese to be a distinct*

breed. The Langshan is also, as Mr. Ludlow is pleased to say, "a wonderful layer." I can add that it is a most excellent table Fowl. My surplus Cockerels at twelve months old are equal in size to small turkeys, and not inferior to them in delicacy and flavour. This, I believe, can scarcely be said of any other breed of Fowls.

Mr. Ludlow's statements, compared with the accounts of the Black Cochins as it was before the Langshan appeared, make it very evident that Buffs crossed with some other variety of Cochins, (probably White), made the first birds; but it was found that these, although they gave plenty of metallic lustre, would not breed true to feather. I must here add that all black breeds are liable to coloured feather, but here it seems a cock was not to be had without them. They then had recourse to Cuckoos and Whites.—All these varieties had yellow faces and yellow legs.—When the Langshan appeared 1872, they at once perceived that it would do to cross in with their bird, to fix its colour and that it would add a "beam of glass," which the Cuckoos and Whites failed in.

Poultry keeping in England is frequently the pastime of the highest in the land. "Staff" has had the effrontery to declare that the winning Black Cochins at the Crystal Palace in 1876, *had not or ought not* to have had a yellow face and yellow legs. I can only say, a noble breeder, whose yard has always been unimpeachable, had birds in the Black Cochins class at this Show, with yellow faces and yellow legs, and I feel sure that neither the owner of the birds, or the Poultry man who had charge of them, will deny this fact.

A. C. CROAD,

Manor House, Durrington,

Worthing, ENGLAND.

Nov. 27th, 1879.

